

Appl. No. : 09/442,627
Filed : November 17, 1999

REMARKS

In the Office Action mailed April 26, 2004 (Paper No. 14), the Examiner rejected Claims 1-19 as being obvious in view of the Kirson et al. reference (U.S. Patent No. 6,114,970), the admitted prior art, the Brusky et al. reference (U.S. Patent No. 5,903,259), the Kadnier reference (U.S. Patent No. 6,097,520) or some combination thereof. By this paper, the Applicant has amended Claims 1 and 9 to distinguish the art of record and therefore requests reconsideration of the above-captioned application in light of the amendments and remarks contained herein.

As an initial matter, the Applicant would like to thank the Examiner for extending the courtesy of a personal interview on June 24, 2004, to Applicant's representatives, Michael H. Trenholm and Nick Zovko. During the interview, a proposed Claim 1 was discussed in light of the Kirson, Brusky and Kadnier references and the after-market nature of the interface was discussed. In particular, the Applicant's representatives pointed out that the Applicant's device was directed towards an after-market product that can be installed into a vehicle and connected to an existing original equipment control system such that the after-market interface can then be used to control an after-market stereo. By this paper, the Applicant has amended Claims 1 and 9 to emphasize that the interface device in this particular implementation is an after-market product that is adapted to allow existing stereo control, such as controls mounted on steering wheels and in the back seat, to be used with a replacement stereo.

In the Office Action, the Examiner cites the Kirson reference as teaching the concept of an interface device that allows for original equipment controls to be used in conjunction with after-market products. However, after careful review of the Kirson et al. reference, it appears that there is no teaching of an interface device itself which is also an after-market product that is adapted to be installed while mounted or otherwise positioned within a vehicle to allow existing controls to be used in conjunction with replacement stereos. Kirson discloses using a new bus architecture system, the intelligent transportation system (ITS) bus architecture, in conjunction with the existing OEM bus and then interposing a gateway controller therebetween. The ITS bus is defined as an industry-wide standard (*See, Column 2, line 24*) and appears to be used to allow for more elaborate controlling of multiple devices in conjunction with the existing vehicle control system architecture. As such, this would suggest that the ITS bus architecture is an existing feature of the system disclosed in the Kirson reference. Consequently, there is no suggestion or teaching of a separate interface device which is an after-market product in and of

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itself to be used in conjunction with existing controls and other after-market products in the manner claimed by the Applicant. For these reasons, the Applicant believes that Claims 1 and 9 are distinguishable over the Kirson et al. reference. Moreover, the remaining references cited by the Examiner, Kadnier and Brusky, also fail to disclose this concept of an after-market product that receives signals in a first format from a stereo control system and translates them into a second format to thereby allow for the use of after-market stereos and allow the after-market stereos to be used with the original equipment control of the vehicle.

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SUMMARY

For the foregoing reasons, the Applicant believes that Claims 1 and 9 are distinguishable over the art of record. The Applicant further believes that the remaining claims define additional patentable subject matter and are further allowable due to their respective dependencies upon Claims 1 and 9. The Applicant therefore believes that the above-captioned application is in condition for allowance and requests the prompt allowance of the same. Should there be any impediment to the prompt allowance of this application that could be resolved by a telephone conference, the Examiner is respectfully requested to call the undersigned at the number shown below.

Please charge any additional fees, including any fees for additional extension of time, or credit overpayment to Deposit Account No. 11-1410.

Respectfully submitted,

KNOBBE, MARTENS, OLSON & BEAR, LLP

Dated: 9/27/01

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